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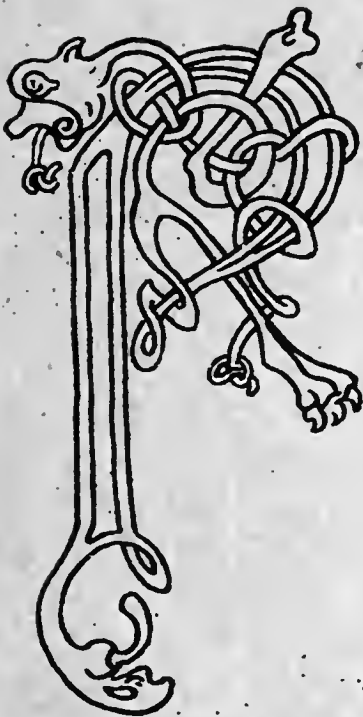


SONGS of the  
Hebriðes



FOR VOICE &  
CELTIC  
AIRS

By



. Kennedy-  
-Fraser.

From a Pencil Drawing by P. K. F.

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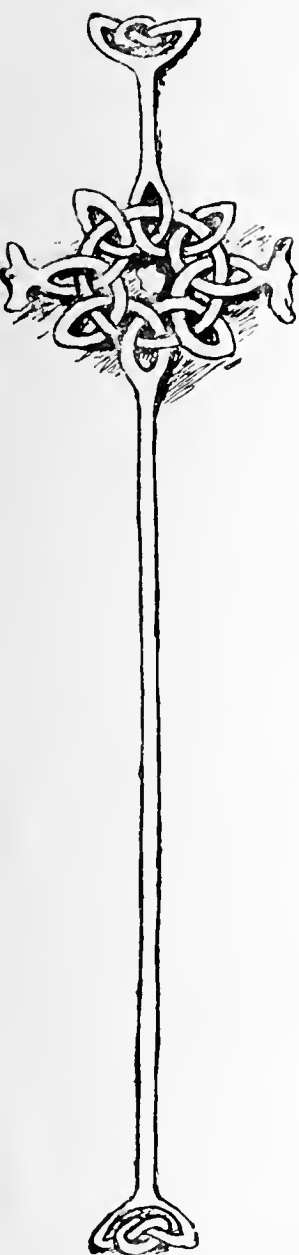
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Patricia Kennedy - Fraser

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## INTRODUCTION.

THIS, the second selection (edited for harping) from our collected "Songs of the Hebrides," is intended to be taken up only after the Seven Songs of our first Harp Album have been mastered. We need not therefore repeat here the instructions already given for the guidance of the harpist using the small Celtic Harp. These Hebridean songs, whenever possible, should certainly be sung to accompaniment, either of the harp, the instrument originally used, or to the modern substitute for the Harp, the piano, which after all is but a harp enclosed in a resonant case supported horizontally on three legs and provided with a keyboard mechanism to control the strings. The Hebrideans were at one time among the most skilful harpers in Europe. Giraldus Cambrensis, a writer of the twelfth century, speaks with rapture of the harping in Ireland and in Scotland of that day, and adds that many were of opinion that the Scots Gaels excelled even the Irish.

In the days sung of in the poems attributed to Ossian, the dirge was accompanied by the harp. Later, we are told, in Patrick Macdonald's collection, both the *luinneags*—the short pathetic songs of the women—and the Bardic poems were adapted to harping. "These *luinneags*," he says, "are in a general way short and of a plaintive cast, analogous to their best poetry, and they are sung by the women, not only at their diversions, but also during almost every kind of work where more than one person is concerned, as milking cows, watching the folds, fulling of cloth, grinding of grain with the quern, haymaking and cutting down corn . . . the greater number of the '*luinneags*' appear to be adapted to the harp, an instrument that was once in high estimation there."

The Harp appears in all the old Celtic tales and legends. "The lovely harp of old" says Padraig Colum, in his "Wild Earth," had three strings: the string of silver, the string of brass, the string of iron—string of laughter, string of sorrow, string of slumber."

And there are Gaelic couplets in Kenneth Macleod's work and in Dr. Carmichael's *Carmina Gadelica* as:—

"Chuir do cheann a nall na mo dhail  
'S gu seinninn dhut clar is cruit"

"Put thy head anear me  
That I may play thee harp and cruit."

and

"Bu bhriagh a sheinneadh i chruit  
'S gu 'm b' fhearr na sheinneadh, a beus."

"Beautiful her music on the harp,  
"Beautifuller than her music, her goodness."

An end came to the harping, and the last Harper of the Isles was Blind Ruari—Ruari Dall, Bard and Harper to Macleod of Dunvegan in the 17th century.

But may we not revive it and sing again in our hearts:—

"My barge is floating on seas of youth-bliss,  
Thou King of harpers, ne'er cease thy harping!"

MARJORY KENNEDY-FRASER.

## ONE WHO SANG "THE CRADLE SPELL OF DUNVEGAN."

“WHAT is yon music which I am hearing, if it is hearing it I am?” said the Lady of Macleod to herself, as she sat in her hall, spinning the wool. And she arose and made for the music, and whither drew it her but, step by step, to the sleep-chamber of her baby son. What saw she there but the Little Woman of the Green Kirtle swathing the child in a silk banner of many colours, and singing over him a cradle spell.

“Ho-ro veel-a-vok, Bone and flesh o’ me,  
Ho-ro veel-a-vok, Blood and pith o’ me.  
Skin like falling snow, green thy mail-coat,  
Live thy steeds be, dauntless thy following.”

“God sain us!” cried out the Lady of Macleod, “It is I who am the mother to yon child.” And at the sound of the Good Name she vanished, the Little Woman of the Green Kirtle.

But the Cradle Spell remained; the Banner, likewise; and, together, they made of a clan the something more than a clan. The women nursed the children and crooned the songs and did the day’s work, with a thought somewhere in the heart of each that on a day of days she might be called to Dunvegan Castle to sing the Cradle Spell over the young heir. And the men, going forth to battle, fought in the hope that now was the day on which the Banner would appear at their head, putting rout on the enemy. Outwardly, at any rate, the luck was mostly with the women. Baby heirs came often; the Banner came but twice. The end of the tale is not yet, however. “What came twice will come thrice,” say the Islesfolk, “and on a day to be, it is the Fairy Flag, going forth for the last time, that will be overcoming the world for us, Gaels.” Which may well be, if one remembers that its first burden was a little child, its first victory a song, and its weaving not of the flesh.

There is a bidding to which the Gael is never false, the bidding which puts him under the spells. And an Islesman is under spells both to his heart and to his head to give love to Mary Macleod, the most fascinating figure in Gaelic poetry from the beginning of the seventeenth century to a century on which fate has not yet put a name. A woman not of the schools but of herself, and fond of taking her own way when her own way seemed the best, she broke, for love of her gift, with such of the old metrical conventions as had hitherto hobbled the bard. Judged by the few poems which are known for certain to be hers, she holds, if not the first place among Gaelic poets, a place at any rate among the first, for sheer artistry and for beauty of rhythm. And if all the songs that are said to be hers are really hers, or even a tithe of them, her place, as a Gael would put it, is at the very head of the table. One may think of her, then, whether in her poetry or in her life, as by no means least in the procession of great Celtic women which began with Deirdre and St. Bride and has, perhaps, not ended with Flora Macdonald.

An Isleswoman from Rōdel of Harris, Mary Macleod, or Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, as she is better known to the Gaels, was, for the genius of her, chosen out of many gifted ones to sing the Cradle Spell to the baby heir of Dunvegan. But no handed-down lullaby, howsoever strong, could express all that the nurse felt towards the little one, and it was song on the song with her, praise on the praise, and rapture on the



rapture, be the hours canonical or not. Ruairi, the Chief of Dunvegan, shaking his head, flung at her the herdman's saying :

Bheir an t-anabarr molaidh an t-anabarr dosgaidh.  
The overmuch praise bringeth the overmuch loss.

And, sure enough, the loss came<sup>1</sup>—once, twice, thrice. After which, by every rule and by every thought of the Isles, it had to be exile for Mary Macleod; the place of her strangerhood, as the Gaelic has it, being the little Island of Sgarba, in the Southern Hebrides. And there the wonder of the Gael came upon her. "Is it not on me the wonder is," cried St. Columba, "to be here in Alba, and to be looking on Moola from Iona." "Great is the wonder on me," said Flora Macdonald, "to be looking on the boiling of the Connel from Dunstaffnage, instead of looking on the Outer Sea from the machair of Uist." And Mary Macleod :

<sup>2</sup> On the knoll I am sitting,  
Sore-thinking in silence,  
The wonder upon me  
Why gaze I on Islay;  
Little thought I aforetime,  
Till yore took its cantrip,  
Fate ever should lure me  
To gaze on Jura from Sgarba.

In those days, there being no fast mail-boats to cause delay, a whisper travelled from isle to isle, if not in the mouth of the wind, at any rate on its heel; and in due time Mary Macleod's plaint reached Dunvegan in Skye and Ròdel in Harris, and the many places where *Sìol Tormaid*, the Seed of Norman, grew. And on a day of days the galley of Macleod cast anchor off Sgarba, having aboard the glad news that Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, was to return home to Dunvegan; only, she was to make no more songs. Make no more songs? As if she wanted to make any more! Sure, her music-of-laughter would henceforth be the croon of the soft Dunvegan voices—and there and then Mary forgot that she was no longer a bard. "Is it a song I am hearing?" asked the steersman. "It is only a tune, O man of my heart"; but to that same tune went words fresh as the breeze that was even then speeding the galley homeward to Dunvegan. "Is it a song I am hearing?" asked the Chief himself another time, after the young heir, <sup>3</sup>unlike his three elder brothers, had recovered from a serious illness. "By your leave, it is only a croon," said Mary Macleod, "and it comes fresh and warm from a glad heart." She was never again forbidden to make a song. Perhaps *E-fein*, Himself, as the Chief was known among the clansfolk, remembered a story which even the Church had never banned. In the days of long before, as a woman of the Isles lay dying, a young <sup>4</sup>mavis went into liting on a rowan-tree in front of the door. "Chase him away," whispered one of the keening women. "Let him alone," said the dying one, "it is my share to find death, it is his share to sing the song, and with the Good Being only is the knowledge of the furthermore."

The tradition of the Isles, as handed down in the ceilidh,<sup>5</sup> gives a picture of Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, which must surely be her very self.

By the look of her, it is not the creel of peats you would be wishing to put on her back, though, indeed, there was the good marrow, too, in her, whether for the hill or for the sea. It is two tartan plaids she would be having on; a little one round her head, with the white frill of the mutch showing through; and a large one, a *tonnag*, draped round her shoulders, and fastened in front by a *braisde*, a silver circlet. It is of silk her gown would often be, as befitted one who might go in by the front door of Dunvegan Castle. In her right hand she would have a staff, with a silver head on it, and in her left a silver mull; and people would be saying that never a foot of her would go on a journey without having in her wallet a silver quaich, out of which folk of name thought it an honour and an obligation to drink. And the eyes of her were so living! And when they would be in the laughter as well, themselves and her share of wrinkles together, you would never wish but to be looking at them.

<sup>1</sup> See also *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, Vol. IV., p. 262. [Miss Frances Tolmie.]

<sup>2</sup> In Gaelic poetry, assonance rather than rhyme is used.

<sup>3</sup> See Mary Macleod's *An Cronan*, verse 2.

<sup>4</sup> Thrush. <sup>5</sup> Kay'lee.

One can imagine, then, the thrill in the ceilidh when, on a memorable night, up would go the door latch, and there would appear, not the usual late neighbour, but the very woman whom the Islesfolk would be wishing to look at. There would be the curtesy for her, did she allow it; but already, no doubt, her upraised hand would have put the artist's silence on such as, panting to give her the glad welcome, would thereby interrupt the teller of the tale or the singer of the song. And then it would be, "Man of my heart, do not give the last word to Patrick the cleric. Never was Ossian, the bard, without the ready answer and the sore word. Teller of the tale, we are listening." Or, "Woman over yonder, is it finishing the song thou art? If only thou wert beginning!" But the folks of the ceilidh would know their luck. Patrick and Ossian, what remained of them, lived in the township; Mary Macleod might be in the other township by sunset, to-morrow. So—"Sit ye down, gentles and semples; sit ye down, each as he may; and sit ye down, arrow-maker." And sometime after midnight, the youth who was feeding the fire regardless of the hole in the peat-stack, would, if he saw older eyes upon him, declare as though on oath, "By the soul of me, myself would never be wishing to 'smoor the fire when Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, is at the ceilidh; but, indeed, myself would be wishing to smoor the sun." Such a night, however, would have put feyness even on a slug, let alone a youth of the Isles.

Mary Macleod, if one may judge by the events she sang and the people she knew, must have gone through nearly fourscore years and ten of ceilidh and song; her full age, according to tradition, being fivescore years and five. In days when people grew old long before their time, she became a pilgrim of song when far beyond middle age, going on foot from clachan to clachan, and by boat from isle to isle, throughout the years. And not even Ruari, the Chief, was wont to meet with a prouder welcome among the Islesfolk than was the little old woman with the lit eyes and the tangle of crowsfeet. Into the various festivities of the various clachans there came in those days a new fascination, the certainty that Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, would be somewhere, and the hope that it would be here rather than there. And if the waulking was here, and the wedding or the harvest-home there, it is here she would be, sure enough, and not there. Only once, it is said, did she hear the laughter of a waulking and pass by. But the fulling women understood; likewise, all who smiled at the quaintness of her blessing upon the little child that was being christened in Rōdel of Harris.

Tri beannachdan an t-sagairt,  
Seachd beannachdan an t-sluaigh;  
Cha'n fhaodar cur ris an tri,  
'S mur mìomhadh cur ris an t-seachd,  
Mo sheachd fein ri seachd an t-sluaigh.

The three blessings of the priest,  
The seven blessings of the people;  
One may not put to the three,  
And if it be not rude to put to the seven,  
My own seven to the seven of the people.

But if Mary Macleod, at the christening, put her own seven blessings to the seven blessings of the people, it was herself she put, blood and bone and heart of her, to the folk life of the Isles, through the waulking of many a clachan. But few realise, perhaps, how much artistry there went to the fulling music of even one web of cloth. Each stage of the work needed its own special kind of song; old words had to be adapted to new tunes, and old tunes to new words; ancient fragments, almost forgotten, had to be eked out by additional verses, while songs not made for labour, such as the heroic ballads, had to be taken to pieces and inserted into a chorus; all of which called for literary and musical skill of a kind which suggests, not so much the folk, as a genius now and again among the folk. In the seventeenth century that genius was Mary Macleod. While the web was still in the loom, a woman, wandering by sea and by land, was busy weaving the songs which in due time would go to the fulling of that same web. The loom, says the Gael, weaves nothing that lasts, save the song which it weaveth not.

Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, sleeps, face downward,<sup>2</sup> by the Church of St. Clement, in Rōdel of Harris, the Iona of her clan. "Not on the clouds would my eyes be, O kinsfolk," said she in the parting, "but on Rōdel of Harris." Her thought was, perhaps, the thought of St. Bride, the Foster-mother, even as her blood was the blood: Beautiful the cloud on high, my children, but more beautiful still the shower which falleth, giving growth to the corn and milk to the cattle, for little children.

KENNETH MACLEOD.

<sup>1</sup> A Scots form of *smother*.

<sup>2</sup> See also Dr. George Henderson's Introduction to *Dain Iain Ghobha*.

# THE CRADLE SPELL OF DUNVEGAN.

Translated by  
KENNETH MACLEOD.

Harp or Piano

*marcato.*

*p* *tempo.* *accel.* *rall.*

ten.

1. Sleep, my lit-tle child, He - ro tenderling, Dream, my little child, He - ro fawnlike one,  
2. Sleep, my lit-tle child, He - ro gentle bred, Dream, my little child, He - ro battle bred,  
3. Ho ro vee la-vok, Ho - ro <sup>1</sup>ai - ly, Ho - ro vee la-vok, Ho - ro ai - ly,  
4. Ho ro vee la-vok, Ho - ro ai - ly, Ho - ro vee la-vok, Ho - ro ai - ly,

*p* *rall.* *accel.* *rall.* *accel.* *rall.*

D.S.

High on mountain brows Be thy stag-tryst, Speed thy yew ar - rows straight antler-wards.  
Skin like fall-ing-snow, Green thy mail-coat, Live thy steeds Daunt - less thy fol-low-ing.  
Dream thy he-ro dream, Thro' thy child sleep, Hang thy shield, Loch - lann - like, heavenwards.  
Our clan galley sail, To thy dreamland, Thro' thy child sleep, Ho ro ai - ly.

*a tempo.* *accel.* *rall.* *accel.* *rall.*

*marcato.*

Last time only.

Sail ..... thro' thy child - sleep .....

*a tempo.* *accel.* *rall.* *pp a tempo.* *rall.*

<sup>1</sup>To rhyme with daily.  
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## MOUTH MUSIC. PORT-A-BIAL.

The Hazel by the River.

English words by  
KENNETH MACLEOD

§ Refrain.

Voice

Harp or Piano

R.H.

L.H.

Hin! Hin! Ha-ra-dal-o Hin! Hin! Ha-ra-dal-o

Verse.

Hin! Ho! Ha-ra-dal-o Hin! Ha-ra-dal-ho-ro

There are falls on the ri-ver, Tunes and all on the ri-ver,  
There are pools in the ri-ver, Wa-ter dogs in the ri-ver  
Theid mi null air an abhinn Thig mi nall air an abhinn  
Tha na maoir ga mo shireadh Tha na saoir ga mo shireadh

R.H.

R.H.

L.H.

Fai-ry falls on the ri-ver, And the ri-ver calls her.  
Ot-ter pools in the ri-ver, And the ri-ver calls him.  
Theid mi null air an abhinn choimhead air an tail leur Hin! Hin! Ha-ra-dal-o Hin! Hin! Ha-ra-dal-o  
Tha na maoir ga mo shireadh choimhead air an tail leur

1st time. D.S. 2nd time.

Hin! Ho! Ha-ra-dal-o Hin! Ha-ra-dal-ho-ro R.H.

Hin! Ha-ra-dal-ho-ro

R.H.

R.H.

L.H.

L.H.

L.H.

## SEALWOMAN'S SEA-JOY.

The Islesman in whom goodness is stronger than love,<sup>†</sup> finding the sealwoman bathing in the creek, will let her go back to her own natural element; the Islesman in whom love is stronger than goodness cunningly hides her skin, and weds her on the third night after he has found her.

The sealwoman was hot and tired baking the bread and making the churn against her husband's return from the hunting-hill. "Ochön, the burning of me," thought she, "what would I not give for a dive and a dip into the beauteous coolness of the cool sea-water!" On the very heel of her words, who rushed in but her wee laddie, his two eyes aglow. "O mother, mother," cried he, "is not this the strange thing I have found in the old barley-kist, a thing softer than mist to my touch!" And if she looked, and look she did, this strange thing, softer than mist, was it not her own skin! Quickly, deftly, the sealwoman, tired and hot, put it on, and taking the straight track to the shore, it was nought for her then but a dip down and a keek up, all evening long, in the beauteous coolness of the cool sea-water. "Wee laddie of my heart," said she, ere night came upon her, "when thou and thy father will be in want, thou wilt set thy net off this rock, and thy mother will throw into it the choice fish that will make a laddie grow, and a man pleased with himself."

And the sealwoman, with a dip down and a keek up, went on lilting her sea-joy in the cool sea-water.

KENNETH MACLEOD.



\* Pronounce "You'n." † "otter." ‡ dao—like French "deux." All the other vowels as in Italian.

N.B.—The words have no meaning save their musical emotional effect.

† See tale of Sealwoman in Vol. I., p. 15.

# SEAL-WOMAN'S SEA-JOY.

Arranged by  
M. KENNEDY-FRASER.

Voice.

Tune lowest string down to E $\flat$

Harp or Piano

R.H. 2 L.H. R.H. 2 L.H. R.H. 2 L.H.

1 Ionn - - da, Ionn - do, Ionn da, od - ar da  
Pronounced 2 "You" n - - da, "You" n do, "You" n da ot - ter da

Ionn da Ionn do Ionn da od - ar da Hi - o dan dao,  
"You" n da "You" n do "You" n da ot - ter da Hee o dan<sup>3</sup> deux

<sup>1</sup> These syllables are merely mouth music of the seal without meaning

<sup>2</sup> Like English 2nd. pers. pronoun. <sup>3</sup> Like the French.

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*Hi - o dan dao,      Hi - o dan dao      od - ar da      Hi o dan dao*  
*Hee - o dan "deux"      Hee - o dan "deux"      ot - ter da      Hee o dan "deux"*

*D.S.*

*Hi - o dan dao,      Hi - o dan dao,      od - ar da.      Ionn da,*  
*Hee o dan "deux"      Hee o dan "deux"      ot ter da      "You" n da*

*Ionn do      Ionn da      od - ar. da.*  
*"You" n do      "You" n da      ot - ter. da.*

*Ionn da.....*  
*"You" n da.....*

*pp*

# A FAIRY PLAIN.

Arranged by  
M. KENNEDY-FRASER.

Voice.

For Harp tune lowest string down to E $\flat$

Harp or Piano

*pp*

*p un poco cresc.*

*mp*

*p*

*rall.*

*pp*

I am sad, O lit - tle sis - ter, O hi o hu o

Low my hut is low and nar - row,

*p sempre legato.*

ho Pi - ty me O lit - tle sis - ter O hi o

Want-ing wisp o' thatch or heath rope

*D.S. al Fine*

hu..... o ho The hill wa - ters stream - sweep  
But not that, my cause.... of

*cresc.*

*D.S. al Fine*

thro' it, sor - row, O - hi - o hu..... o ho Cold hill wa - ters  
'Tis not that, my

*dim.*

*D.S. al Fine*

stream - sweep thro' it. cause of sor - row, O hi o hu..... o ho

*pp* *dim.*

*Last time only.*

But the loss of my..... one daugh-ter.....

*dim.* *rall.* *marcato.* *pp* *L.H.* *R.H.*

# MULL FISHER'S LOVE SONG.

Words by  
M. KENNEDY-FRASER.

*Longingly, but with rubato.*

Voice. *ten.* *ten.* *R.H.*

\*O Mhair-ead og! .....  
O Mhair-ead og! .....

Harp or Piano. *L.H.*

*(String.  
un poco).*

Mhair - ead, my girl, .....  
Mhair - ead, my girl, .....

*R.H.* *R.H.* *R.H.* *R.H.* *R.H.*

*L.H.* *L.H.* *ritenuto.* *L.H.* *Stringendo.* *L.H.* *L.H.*

Thy sea-blue eyes ..... with witch-er-y .....  
Thy voice like mu - sic o'er the sea .....

*R.H.* *R.H.* *R.H.* *R.H.* *R.H.*

*ritenuto.* *L.H.* *stringendo.* *L.H.* *L.H.* *L.H.* *L.H.*

\*Pronounced O Vyrit awk. Mairead, a maiden's name.

Haunt me by night ..... Out on the deep .....  
 Haunts me by day ..... Off Mullswild shore, .....

*ritenuto.* ..... *stringendo.* .....  
 2 1 2 1

..... I can-not sleep ..... For  
 ..... My heart is sore ..... For

*ritenuto.* ..... *poco rall.*

*This line between first and second verses only.* ..... *D.S.*

love o' thee, .....

*stringendo.*

*Third Verse.*

Oh Mhair-ead og! ..... Mhair - ead, my girl, .....

*Rubato as before.*

Thy heart so true..... and

in-no-cent Draws me to thee.....

By night, by day, ..... I can-not pray

For love o' thee.....

*poco rall.*



# THE DOWERLESS MAIDEN.

Ged tha mi gun chrodh, gun aighean.

English by  
M. KENNEDY-FRASER.

§ Refrain.

Voice.

Ged tha mi gun chrodh gun aig hean,  
Pronounced Get ha me goon chro goon aye-yan

Harp  
or  
Piano.

L.H. L.H. L.H. L.H.

Gun chrodh laigh, gun chaoraich a-gam, Ged tha mi gun chrodh gun aighean, Gheibh mi fhathast  
Goon chro laoi goon chaorich a-kum, Get ha me goon chro goon aye-yan, Yo me ha-ast

Verse.

oi-geargrinn.  
oichkur "green?"

Lit - tle heed, tho' I have neither Ewes nor milk-kye,  
Ne'er was wealth o' kye on upland, Sheep or goats on

D.S.

sheep nor cat-tle, Lit - tle heed, tho' I have neither, Sure, I'll find my true love dear.  
rock or moorland Ought to me, and my own dear one Far a-way on storm-y seas.

AFTER  
LAST  
REFRAIN.

\* "ch" as in "loch"

## Fare thee well.

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Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, having seen the last of her nurslings steering a boat, was now leaving Dunvegan Castle for her own Isle of Bernera. Her right arm was leaning on a staff; her left arm was carrying a little burden that was no longer there. And whom met she on the track to the leaving shore but Blind Ruari, the Harper. "I am not envying thee, Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, blind though I am. It is growing out of thine arms the little ones will always be — and are they not the two sore things, the broken harp and the empty arm." "It is thine own finger that can touch the string, Blind Ruari. But I am thinking it is not out of its own head the harp is singing, or the arm is fondling. And so fare thee well, Ruari, Harper, maker of music." "And fare thee well, Mairi, Daughter of Alastair Rua, maker of song."

# Songs of the Hebrides.

## PRESS NOTICES.

Ernest Newman, writing of the Hebridean Song Recitals, given by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser and her daughter, says: "Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser holds the highest place among British folk-song collectors. She has laboured hard in the collection and editing of Hebridean song. She has a poet's love of the islands and the peculiar phase of civilisation they represent; but she is also a very skilled musician, and the accompaniments she has arranged for these songs are equal to the best that has been done in any other field. The songs themselves have a strange beauty that grows on us the better we know them. They have a very definite physiognomy and a very definite soul, both of them the result of the constant pressure of a very definite environment upon a people virtually isolated from the general life of Europe. These islands seem to have produced some song-writers to whom it is not at all extravagant to attribute genius. There are melodies among these songs that are as purely perfect as any melody could be. Schubert and Hugo Wolf would have knelt and kissed the hands of the men who conceived them . . . for sheer beauty of invention, sheer loveliness in the mere fall of the notes, some of these melodies are without their superior, whether in folk-song or in art-song. Schubert himself never wrote a more perfectly satisfying or more haunting melody, for example, than that of the 'Sea-gull of the Land-under-Waves.'"

"It is to be hoped this is not their last concert of this rare music! . . . This music, from Eigg, Barra, Skye, the Uists, Islay, and the Lewes was generally of a more melodious, less rugged type than one expected. The lovely cradle songs for the heirs of the Macleods, the Macneils, and the Macleans of Coll have the gentle melody and simple movement that are found in Irish songs. The 'kilts' sung over the spinning-wheel, the loom, the churn, the milking-pail (the last in a rhythm of seven beats) have a primitive vigour and humour, and the charm that belongs to a romantic world."—*The Times*.

"Making the hitherto untouched Hebrides her special domain, she has rescued from oblivion many especially fine airs . . . that well repay a closer acquaintance, for they have peculiarities that they share, so far as we are aware, with the music of no other land. . . . Their makers drew their inspiration from the sea, and there is a note in their music which we do not find in the more familiar type of Scottish ballad. Such songs as 'The Mull Fisher,' 'The Island Sheiling Song,' the quaint 'Seal Woman's Croon,' and 'Kishmul's Galley,' have a charm peculiar to themselves and quite irresistible."—*Daily Telegraph*.

"In national song Great Britain is richer probably than any other country. Certainly the amount of that song is greater, for it comes from at least four distinct sources in these islands, . . . and, as far as the music of the extreme North is concerned, a foremost place as collector is taken by Mrs. Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, a well-known Scottish musician."—*Morning Post*.

"Fortunately, all these songs have now been collected and published, but to realize all their fascination one must hear them from the collector herself."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"To hear some of these old melodies is to know the meaning of true inspiration."—*Glasgow Herald*.

"These curious folk-pieces reflect much of the humour, the pathos, and mysticism of the musical traditions of the Western Highlands and Islands, and have a high musical as well as antiquarian and historical value."—*Scotsman*.

© "A set of four 'Songs of the Hebrides,' by Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, proved of much historic as well as musical interest, as the composer has spent some years in collecting a series of these folk-songs from the Hebrides, taking down the ancient tunes as they were sung by the people of the Isles. These old melodies have been very cleverly woven into a harmonic texture which enhances their charm without destroying the archaic character, and which suggests the atmosphere of the old Celtic folk-song."—*Standard*.

"The feature of the evening's work was the rendering of Hebridean folk-songs, the words and music of which had been taken down by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser from the lips of old islanders."—*Glasgow Record and Mail*.

Granville Bantock writes: "This living record of song, preserved by oral tradition in lonely islands of the Hebrides, in wild lands of mountain and moor, in the wrack and heather-thatched sheilings of fisher-folk and herdsmen, has for all who will hear it with the inner spiritual imagination born of sympathy, a message most poignant, which touches the very life of learned and simple alike. . . . When we use the piano as a medium of approach to understanding the peculiar idiom of Celtic music, the harmony and rhythm should be most subtly adapted to the mood or atmosphere, following it sinuously as the foam-wake whitens around the boat's keel, or the sail is trimmed to a favouring breeze. As an example of how this result has been achieved, Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's 'Songs of the Hebrides' takes foremost place. It is a classic work, unique in its knowledge and expression of the peculiar characteristics of Gaelic music."

Rutland Boughton, in the *Music Student*, alluding to the volume of "Songs of the Hebrides," with its blend of racially preserved melody, poetic transliterations of Gaelic lore into English by the Isleman, Kenneth Macleod, and the artistic musical treatment of the airs by Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, says (with the trenchant language of exaggeration): "I, myself, place these with the few greatest things in music—the '48,' the 'Choral Symphony,' and 'Parsifal.' The accompaniments are the perfection of folk-song atmosphere. The composer is a real genius."

"What songs are these! Songs of sorrow, and of rapture too, songs of the sea and of the soil, of birth and of death and of love. . . . The accompaniments are of great originality, beauty, and fitness. The work will do more to give Celtic folk-song an assured position in the art-world than any that have yet appeared. The work of Kenneth Macleod, the Gaelic Editor, calls for more than a passing word of commendation. A collector himself, he has given freely of his store of melodies, and has also fitted original verses of excellent quality to several songs when the original words obtainable were merely 'mutilated fragments.' . . . A new and individual note is struck; here is a man with a voice of his own and no echo of others, a writer who possesses the magic of style."—*The Celtic Review*.

"As for Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's recital, I consider it the most artistic entertainment, both in the devising and the execution, in which London has participated for a very long time. Her art is a conglomerate thing, it is not precisely creative and it is in part imitative, but it is wholly interpretative in the very highest sense. It is to be coupled with that of J. M. Synge, or that of Yvette Guilbert, or that of Phil May. There is no category for the unique, and Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's art is completely personal. . . ."—*Musical Standard*.

"To enthusiasts like Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser and Bourgault-Ducoudray the musician is much indebted. And with these names we may place that of Korbay, whose work has made famous the songs of his country."—*Musical Opinion*.

"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's collections are unique. . . . No folk-song collections ever published have revealed more true sympathy and understanding than these. . . ."—*Music Student*.

"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's first volume of 'Songs of the Hebrides' is now well known, but there is now a second volume containing songs collected by her daughter Patuffa and herself in the Western Isles of Scotland. Kenneth Macleod (who is Gaelic co-editor of the songs) has cleverly said that 'The loom weaves nothing that endures save the song which it weaveth not.' And it was a 'Weaving Lilt,' the very latest fruit of this search for songs, that was the first to arouse a demand for repetition. Another favourite was a Reaping Song from Islay."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser has taken the trouble of research, and spent some time collecting a series of songs from the Hebrides, taking down the tunes as they were sung by the people of these western islands. She has skilfully used the old airs as themes for miniature compositions, and without impairing the quality of the folk-song, has contrived to produce an art-song. The haunting melodies exercised a potent charm upon the audience. The sea music is prominent in the melodies."—*Scotsman*.

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